



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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Somali Hostage Negotiator Arrested and Charged With Piracy In Attack on Merchant Ship - Second Person to Face Charges in Takeover of Vessel -

WASHINGTON - Ali Mohamed Ali, 48, has been indicted for conspiracy to commit piracy and other charges that allege he acted as a negotiator on behalf of Somali pirates during the takeover of a merchant ship in the Gulf of Aden, announced U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. and James W. McJunkin, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office.

Ali, also known as Ismail Ali or Ahmed Ali Adan, had been residing in Somalia. He was arrested on April 20, 2011 at Dulles International Airport. He is scheduled to make his initial appearance April 26, 2011 in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

The indictment, returned April 15, 2011 and unsealed today, charges him with conspiracy to commit piracy, piracy under the law of nations, attack to plunder a vessel, and aiding and abetting in the crimes. If convicted of the charges, he faces a sentence of up to life in prison.

This marks the first time that charges have been filed in the District of Columbia against a person accused of negotiating and receiving a ransom in an act of piracy.

According to the indictment, Ali and others conspired to take over the *M/V CEC Future*, a Danish-owned vessel carrying American cargo, in a plan to hold the crew and cargo for ransom. The pirates used AK-47s and a rocket-propelled grenade to take over the ship off the coast of Somalia on November 7, 2008, and held it for a total of 71 days. The vessel was owned by Clipper Group, and contained cargo belonging to McDermott International, Inc.

Ali boarded the ship within two or three days of the attack, the indictment states. He allegedly communicated with the ship's owners and demanded \$7 million for the release of the vessel and its cargo and crew. According to the indictment, Ali agreed on January 13, 2009 to accept \$1.7 million, which was delivered the following day. The takeover ended on January 16, 2009, with the release of the 13 crew members, as well as the vessel and cargo.

“This case shows our resolve to prosecute pirates and those who profit from crimes on the high seas,” said U.S. Attorney Machen. “Those who negotiate and collect these ransoms are every bit as responsible for these crimes as the pirates who commandeer the ships.”

The defendant is the second person to be charged in the case. Jama Idle Ibrahim, also known as Jaamac Ciidle, 39, was arrested last year and pled guilty in September 2010 to charges of conspiracy to commit piracy under the law of nations and conspiracy to use a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence. His plea marked the first conviction in the District of Columbia for a piracy-related offense.

Ibrahim, also of Somalia, was sentenced earlier this month to the maximum penalty of five years in prison for the piracy conspiracy charge and the maximum of 20 years for the firearm conspiracy charge. That sentence runs concurrently to a 30-year prison term Ibrahim is now serving for the April 2010 attack on a U.S. navy vessel, also in the Gulf of Aden.

An indictment is merely a formal allegation that a defendant has committed a violation of criminal laws and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.

This case is being investigated by the FBI’s Washington Field Office and the Joint Terrorism Task Force and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Brenda J. Johnson from the U.S. Attorney’s Office, National Security Section, and Trial Attorney Jennifer E. Levy from the Counterterrorism Section of the Department of Justice’s National Security Division.

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